

MARVEL®



16th Jul.88

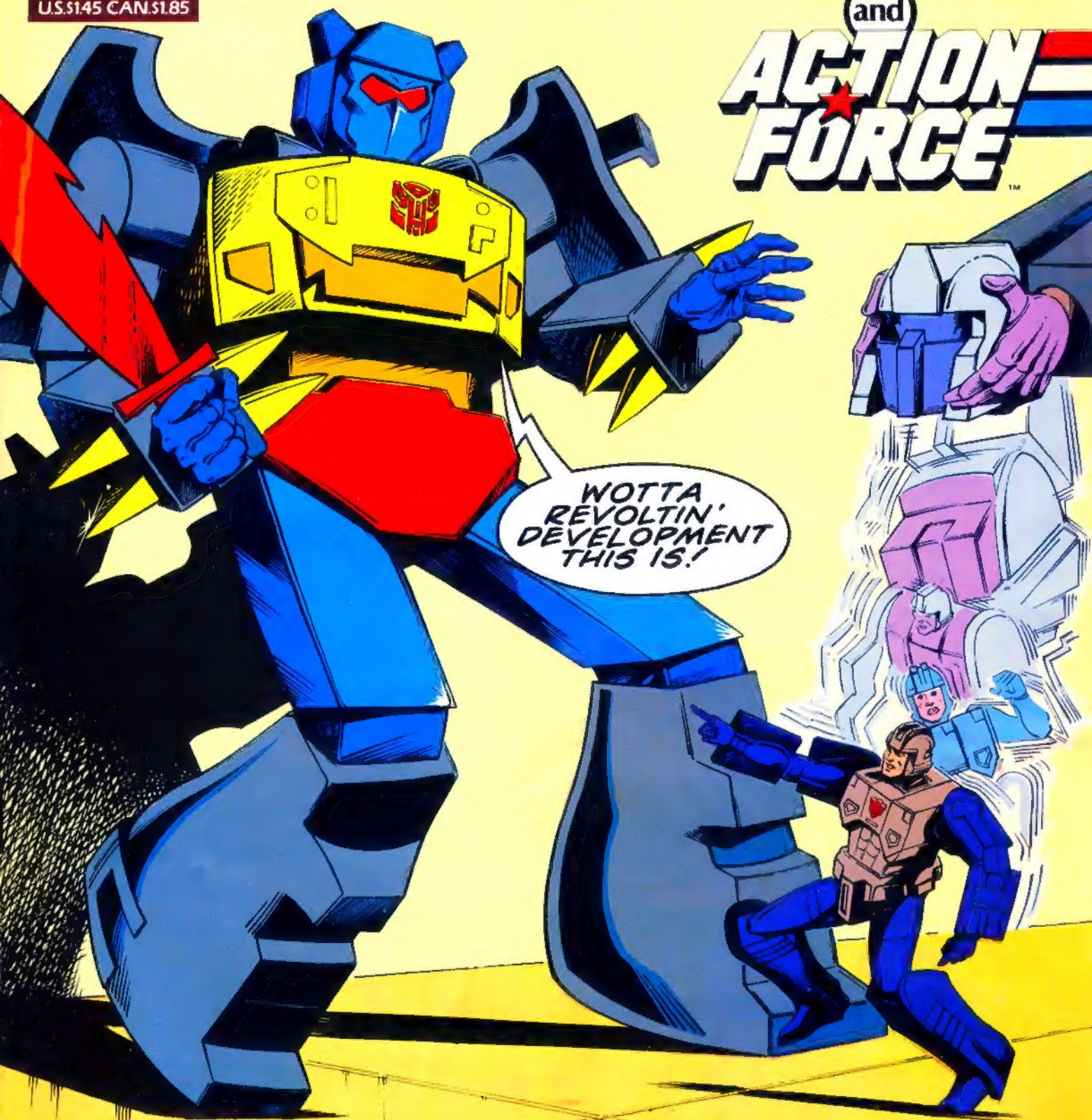
Nº174 35p

U.S.\$1.45 CAN.\$1.85

THE TRANSFORMERS



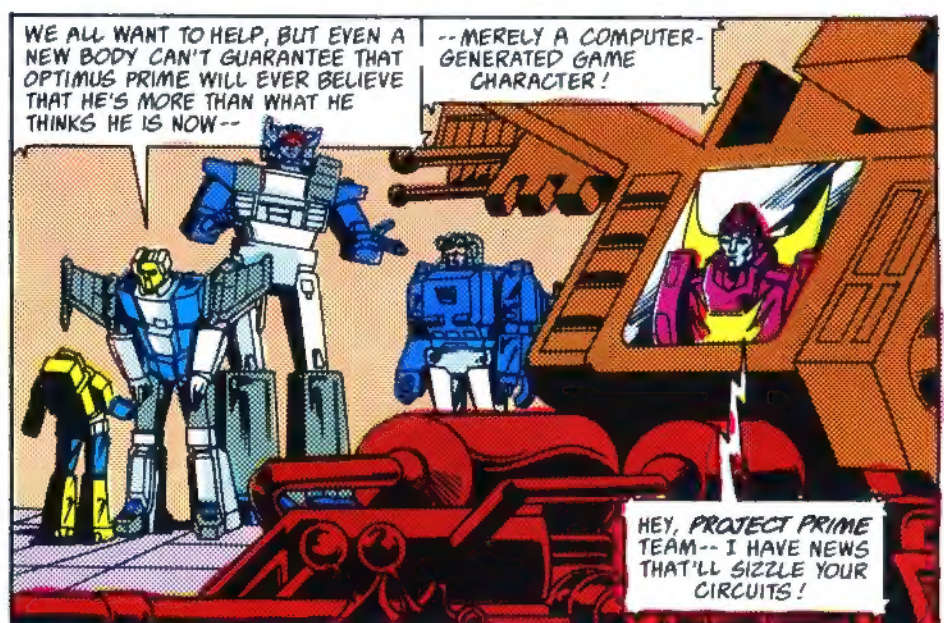
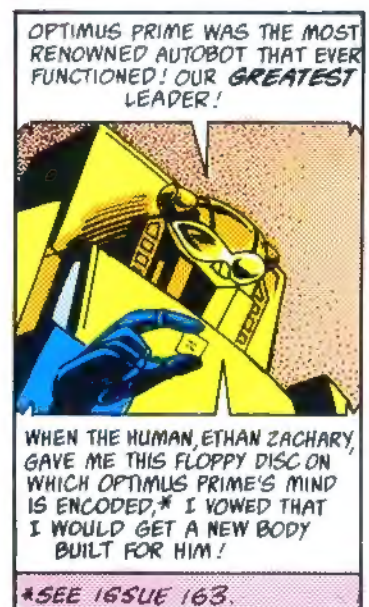
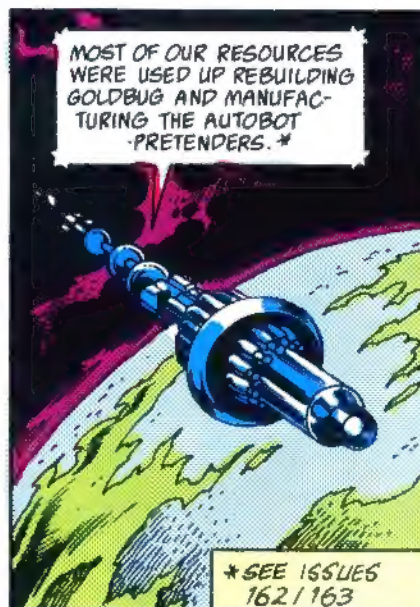
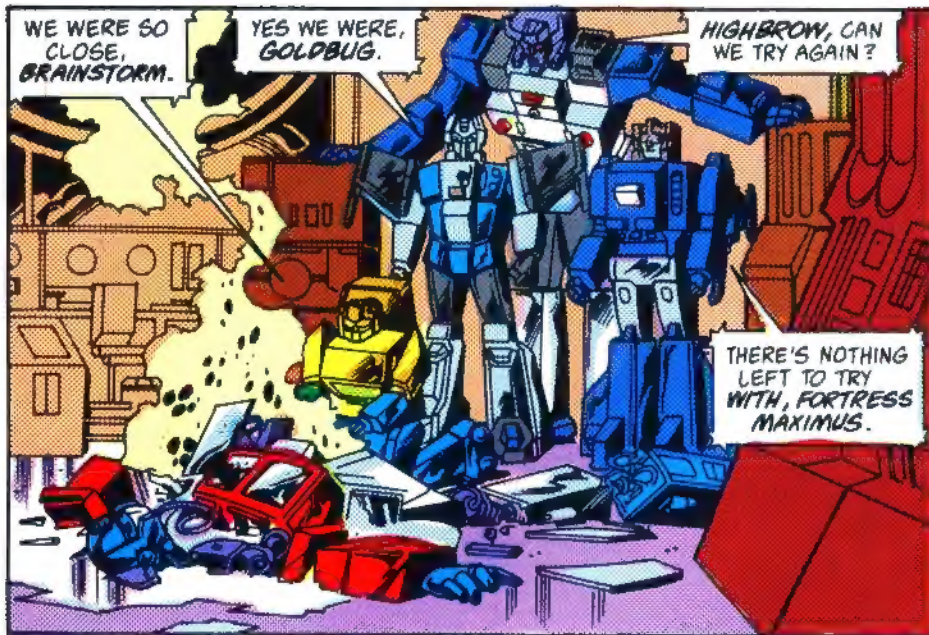
and
**ACTION
FORCE**



TRANSFORMERS™



Script BOB BUDIANSKY ■ Pencils JOSE DELBO ■ Inks DANNY BULANADI ■ Letters BILL OAKLEY ■ Colour NEL YOMTOV



MOMENTS LATER...

WHAT IS IT, HOT ROD?

DIG THIS-- USING INFO THAT GOLDBUGGY GAVE ME ABOUT HIS FORMER HOME, *THE ARK*, I FINALLY MANAGED TO TRACK IT DOWN!

AND IT'S NO LONGER WHERE 'BUGGY LEFT IT--ON EARTH. IT'S SPACE-CRUIISING JUST A FEW THOUSAND MILES FROM HERE!

GREAT WORK, HOT ROD. SET A COURSE FOR THE ARK IMMEDIATELY!

SURELY A SHIP AS LARGE AS YOU SAY THE ARK IS WILL HAVE THE FACILITIES TO REBUILD OPTIMUS PRIME, GOLDBUG. AND YOU'LL BE ABLE TO SEE ALL YOUR OLD FRIENDS AGAIN!

ER, YES... I WILL, WON'T I...

SOON, ABOARD THE ARK...

MOVE THE FILE A LITTLE TO THE LEFT, BOSS--

--THAT'S IT. THE LAST OF THE CORROSION. YOUR MECHAMOLARS LOOK AS GOOD AS NEW!

JOINTS STICK, SLUDGE. WE WANT FRESH LUBRICANT! **GET IT!**

COMMANDER GRIMLOCK!

IT'S THAT WHINER, DOC RATCHET, AGAIN, BOSS.

LET ME SPEAK, SLAG.

COMMANDER, AGAIN I **BEG** YOU--RETURN THE ARK TO EARTH. WE LEFT OUR ENEMIES, THE *DECEPTICONS*, THERE.

WHO *KNOWS* WHAT HORRORS THEY'RE INFLECTING ON THE NATIVE HUMANS!

WHO CARES!

PUNY HUMANS NOT GRIMLOCK'S PROBLEM! ME FIGHT 'CONS WHEN ME FEEL LIKE FIGHTING!

BUT--

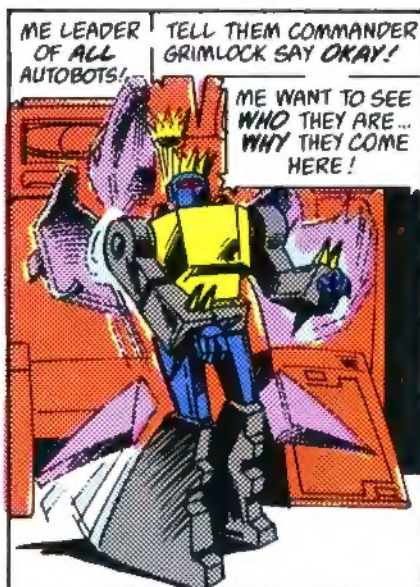
YOU BE DOCTOR, RATCHET! GRIMLOCK BE COMMANDER!

HEY, BOSS! WE JUST GOT A TRANSMISSION--BUNCH'A' AUTOBOTS FROM *ANOTHER* SPACESHIP WANNA COME ABOARD!

AND THEY CHECK OUT! THEY'RE **LEGIT!**

WHAT, *SNARL*--OTHER AUTOBOTS?!

WELL... M-ME GRIMLOCK! ME **GREAT LEADER!**



ME LEADER
OF ALL
AUTOBOTS!

TELL THEM COMMANDER
GRIMLOCK SAY **OKAY!**

ME WANT TO SEE
WHO THEY ARE...
WHY THEY COME
HERE!



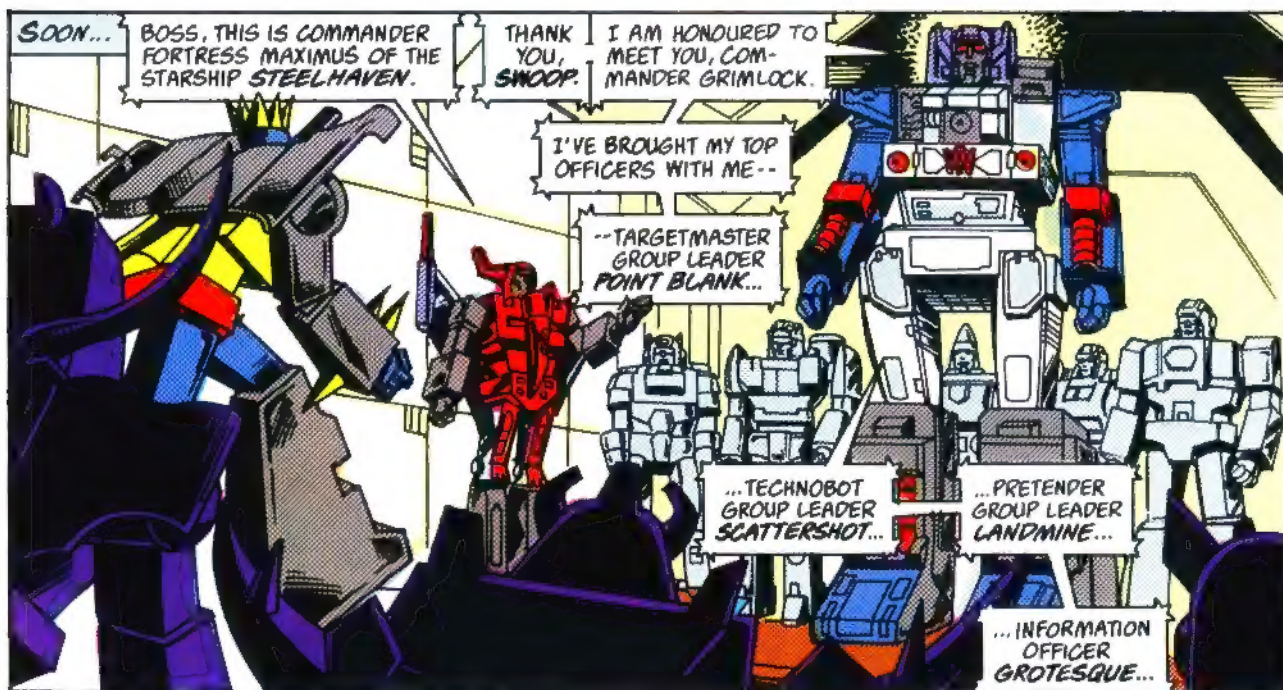
THIS WAY, BOSS.
THEY'RE ABOUT
TO ARRIVE!

SNARL!

B-BOSS--?



OOPS-- I FORGOT, NOW YOU
LOOK BEAUTIFUL, BOSS.



SOON...

BOSS, THIS IS COMMANDER
FORTRESS MAXIMUS OF THE
STARSHIP STEELHAVEN.

THANK
YOU,
SWOOP.

I AM HONURED TO
MEET YOU, COM-
MANDER GRIMLOCK.

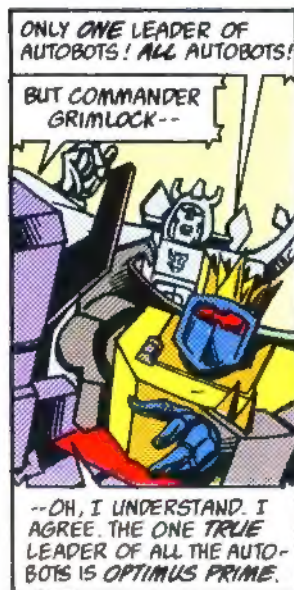
I'VE BROUGHT MY TOP
OFFICERS WITH ME--

--TARGETMASTER
GROUP LEADER
POINT BLANK...

...TECHNOBOT
GROUP LEADER
SCATTERSHOT...

...PRETENDER
GROUP LEADER
LANDMINE...

...INFORMATION
OFFICER
GROTESQUE...



ONLY **ONE** LEADER OF
AUTOBOTS! **ALL** AUTOBOTS!

BUT COMMANDER
GRIMLOCK--

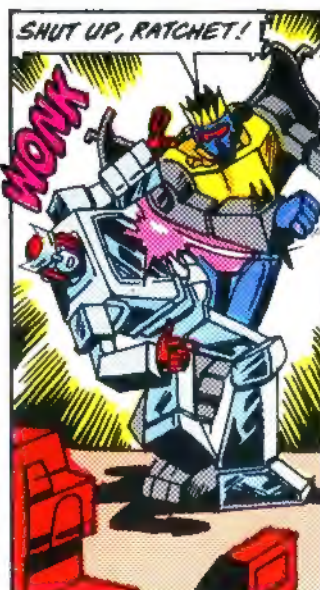
--OH, I UNDERSTAND. I
AGREE. THE ONE **TRUE**
LEADER OF ALL THE AUTO-
BOTS IS **OPTIMUS PRIME.**



WHICH IS WHY WE COME HERE--
TO TRANSFER HIS MIND, ENCODED
ON THIS DISK, INTO A NEW BODY,
WHICH WE WERE HOPING THE
ARK COULD BUILD-- WITH YOUR
PERMISSION, OF COURSE.

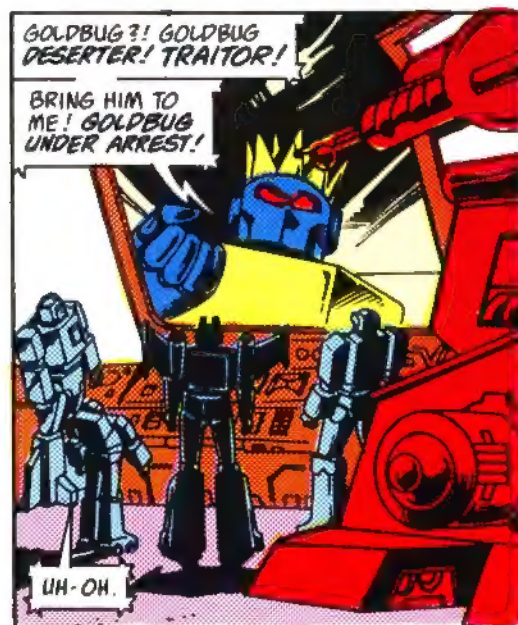
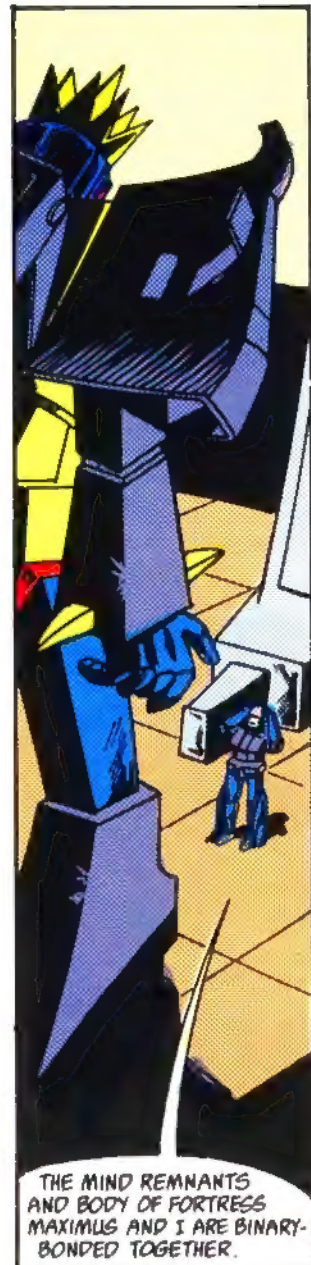
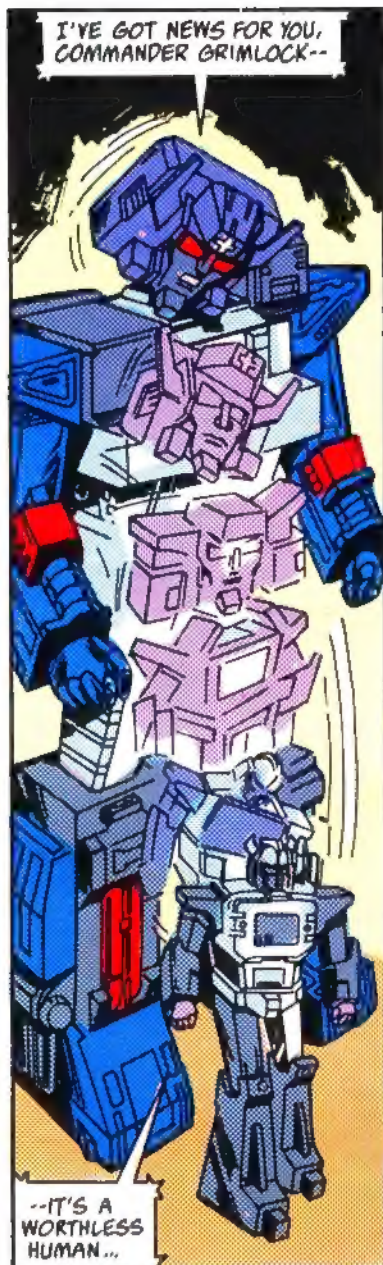


IS... IS THAT **REALLY**
OPTIMUS PRIME? OUR MOST BELOVED--



SHUT UP, RATCHET!

WONK



IT'S SUDDENLY
BECOME OBVIOUS
WHY YOU DIDN'T
SEEM TOO
PLEASED BEFORE
ABOUT SEEING
YOUR OLD
FRIENDS AGAIN,
GOLDBUG.

PARDON ME, BRAINSTORM
--I HAVE A TRANSPORT
TO CATCH!

MINUTES LATER, AFTER SPIKE HAS RE-
COMBINED WITH FORTRESS MAXIMUS...

GOLDBUG IS UNDER MY
PROTECTION, GRIMLOCK.
I CAN'T--

NO NEED TO RISK COMBAT ANY MORE,
FORTRESS MAXIMUS. I'M HERE.

GOLDBUG!

FOR THE SAKE OF AUTO-
BOT UNITY, I FELT IT WAS
BEST I TURN MYSELF IN.

SLAG, SNARL-- THROW
PRISONER IN BRIG!

WE STILL FIGHT, FRUITLOOP
MULTIPUCK--FOR SUPREM-
ACY OF AUTOBOTS!

WHAT?!

WHAT?!

ANCIENT AUTOBOT TRADITION--
WHEN TWO WARRIORS NO AGREE--

...THEN
MIGHT
DECIDES
RIGHT!

HMM... ACCORDING TO
FORTRESS MAXIMUS'S
MEMORY BANK, THE
TRADITION HE INVOKES
IS VALID...

...BUT CONSIDERED BARBARIC
BY MODERN STANDARDS AND
HARDLY EVER CITED!

I'LL HAVE AN ANSWER FOR
YOU, GRIMLOCK. SOON. MY
OFFICERS AND I WILL
RETURN TO OUR SHIP TO
CONFER!

MEANWHILE...

OOF!

A PERSONAL
VISIT--?

BLASTER!

A VIDEO-LETTER WOULD
HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENT,
GOLDBUG.

WHAT HAPPENED
TO YOU?!

GRIMLOCK SENT ME ON VACATION.
PERMANENT VACATION.

HE CLAMPED ME TO THIS ENERGY-SUCKING VARIABLE VOLTAGE HARNESS.

IT'S NOT NEARLY AS COMFY AS IT LOOKS.

AND WHY ARE YOU HERE, LITTLE BUDDY?

I GAVE MYSELF UP--THOUGHT IT WOULD STOP GRIMLOCK FROM CHALLENGING MY NEW COMMANDER, FORTRESS MAXIMUS, TO A DUEL OVER LEADERSHIP.

IT DIDN'T.

AND FORTRESS MAXIMUS HAS NO CHANCE OF WINNING--HE STILL HASN'T RECOVERED FROM SEVERE INJURIES.*

IF WE COULD ONLY HELP HIM SOMEHOW.

* SUFFERED IN TRANSFORMERS # 159.

AFFAIRS OF THE AUTOBOTS ARE NO LONGER MY CONCERN. I'VE BEEN RUSTING AWAY IN HERE TOO LONG... TO CARE.

NOT LIKE I USED TO CARE--

"GRIMLOCK WAS AWAY FROM THE ARK. THE AUTOBOTS CAME TO ME. THEY BEGGED ME TO LEAD THEM. I ACCEPTED.

*BUT THEN I FOUND OUT GRIMLOCK AND HIS DINOBOTS WERE THREATENING FOUR HUMAN CHILDREN UNDER THE PROTECTION OF SKY LYNX.

I SURRENDERED TO GUARANTEE THEIR ESCAPE.

*HARDLY SEEMS WORTH IT--NO ONE'S EVER HEARD FROM THEM AGAIN.

AND NO ONE SEEMED TO CARE ABOUT ME. GRIMLOCK LOCKED ME IN HERE AND THREW AWAY THE KEY.

GUESS GRIMMY WAS STILL STEAMED THAT THE TWO OF US DISOBEYED AND LEFT HIM.*

WE HAD NO CHOICE. HE ORDERED US TO HARM HUMANS IF THEY INTERFERED WITH OUR MISSION.

* SEE TRANSFORMERS # 144

* SEE TRANSFORMERS # 121

AND LOOK WHERE CARING ABOUT HUMANS-- ABOUT *ANYONE* OTHER THAN OURSELVES--HAS GOTTEN US!

SELF-PITY ISN'T YOUR STYLE, BLASTER.

THE AUTOBOTS HAVE *ONE* CHANCE FOR NOT BEING FOREVER DIVIDED BY THIS DUEL-- AND THAT'S IF GRIMLOCK *LOSES*.

BUT HE WON'T, UNLESS, AS ALLOWED BY CUSTOM, SOMEONE VOLUNTEERS TO FIGHT IN *PLACE* OF Fortress MAXIMUS. SOMEONE WHO COULD *WIN*.

YOU'RE ONE OF THE FEW WHO COULD DO THAT, BLASTER.

THE AUTOBOTS CAN ALL GO TO THE SCRAPYARD BEFORE I GET INVOLVED AGAIN.

THEN DON'T DO IT FOR THE AUTOBOTS...

...DO IT FOR *YOURSELF*. DO IT TO GET *EVEN* WITH GRIMLOCK.

SEVERAL MINUTES LATER...

I MUST GO THROUGH WITH THIS...

...IF THE AUTOBOTS ARE TO HAVE ANY HOPE OF PROTECTING EARTH FROM THE DECEPTICONS.

COMMANDER GRIMLOCK, THIS IS Fortress MAXIMUS.

WITH GREAT RELUCTANCE, I ACCEPT YOUR CHALLENGE.

NO NEED, FORK-TONGUE MAXIFACE...

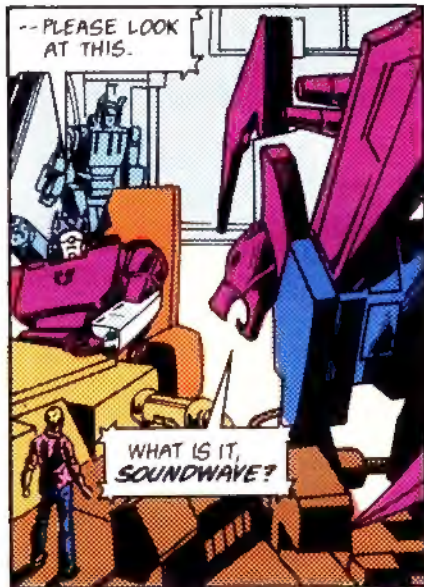
--BLASTER!

...A CHAMPION STEPS FORWARD TO FIGHT IN YOUR PLACE--



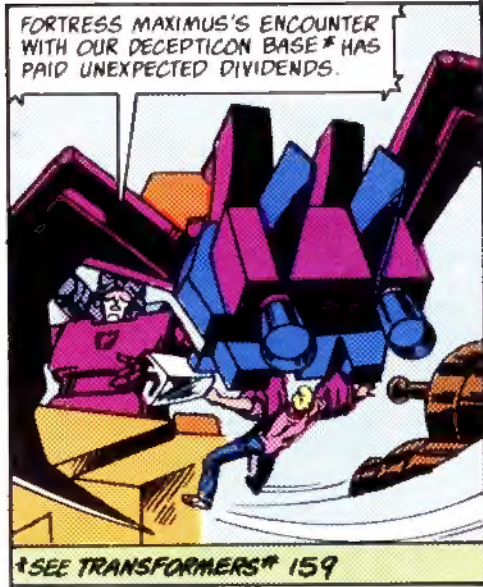
ELSEWHERE...

COMMANDER
RATBAT--



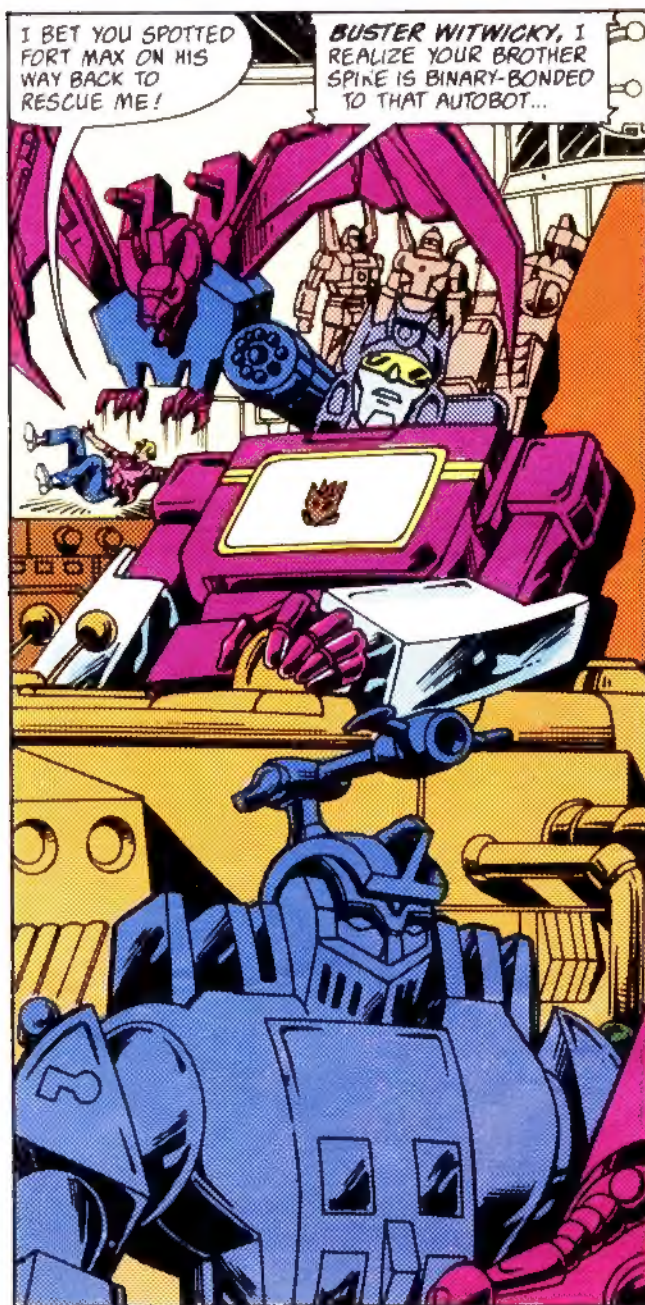
--PLEASE LOOK
AT THIS.

WHAT IS IT,
SOUNDWAVE?



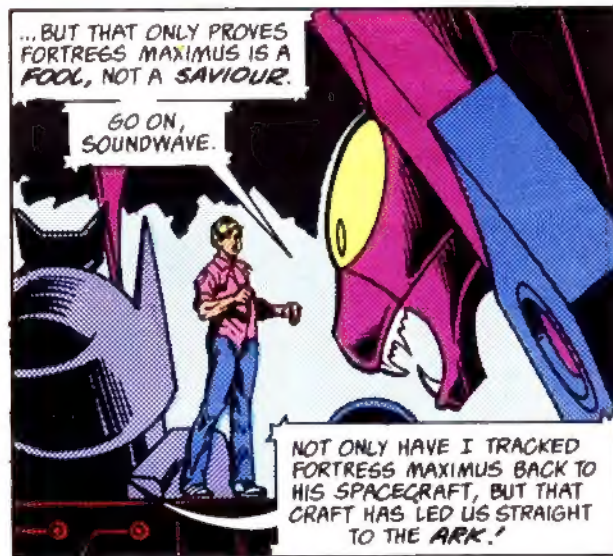
FORTRESS MAXIMUS'S ENCOUNTER
WITH OUR DECEPTICON BASE* HAS
PAID UNEXPECTED DIVIDENDS.

SEE TRANSFORMERS 159



I BET YOU SPOTTED
FORT MAX ON HIS
WAY BACK TO
RESCUE ME!

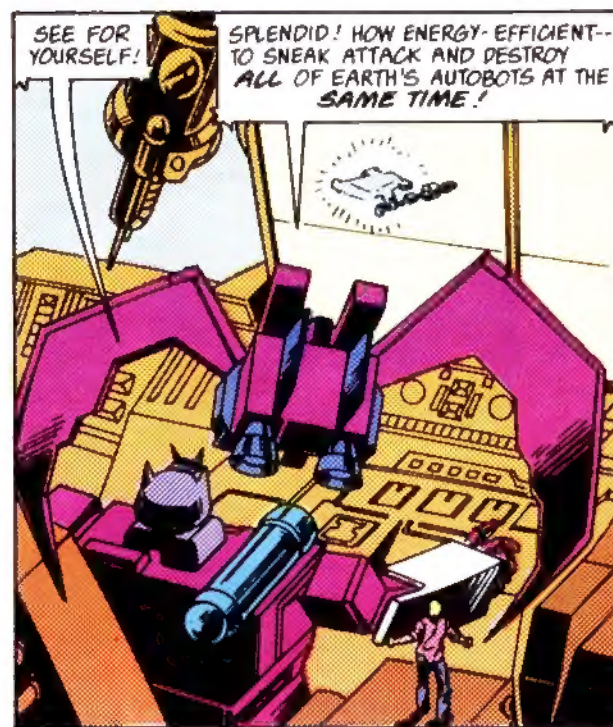
BUSTER WITWICKY, I
REALIZE YOUR BROTHER
SPIKE IS BINARY-BONDED
TO THAT AUTOBOT...



...BUT THAT ONLY PROVES
FORTRESS MAXIMUS IS A
FOOL, NOT A SAVIOUR.

GO ON,
SOUNDWAVE.

NOT ONLY HAVE I TRACKED
FORTRESS MAXIMUS BACK TO
HIS SPACECRAFT, BUT THAT
CRAFT HAS LED US STRAIGHT
TO THE ARK.*



SEE FOR
YOURSELF!

SPLENDID! HOW ENERGY-EFFICIENT-
TO SNEAK ATTACK AND DESTROY
ALL OF EARTH'S AUTOBOTS AT THE
SAME TIME!

SOON, SOMEWHERE ON THE
SURFACE OF THE MOON...

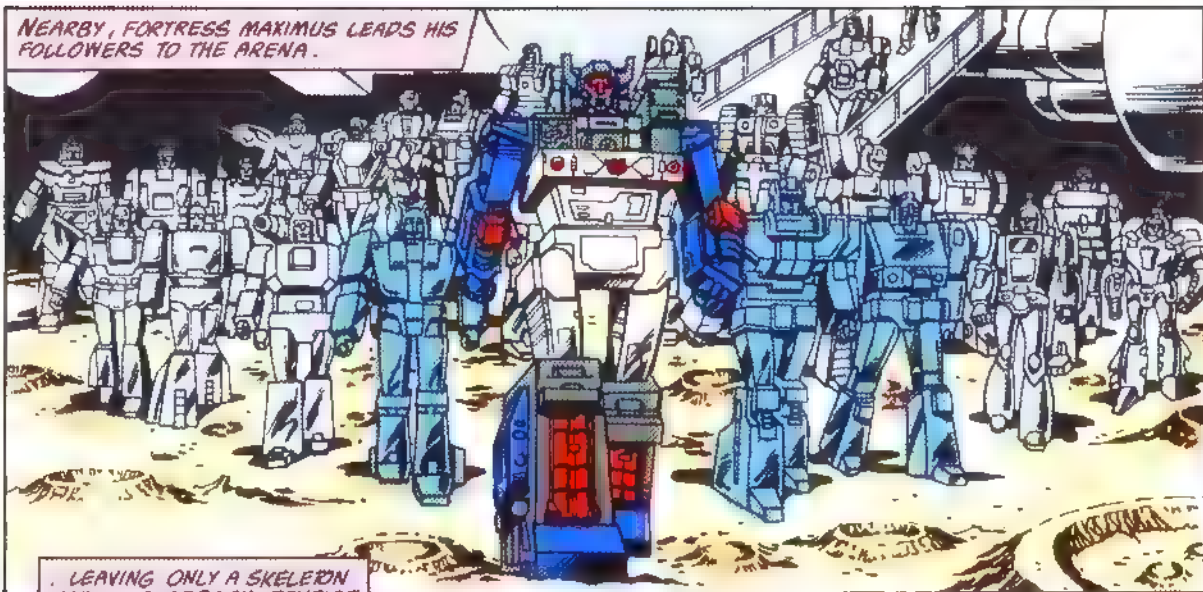
...TWO MIGHTY SPACECRAFT
LAND BEFORE A CRATER-
RINGED FIELD

A BATTLEFIELD.

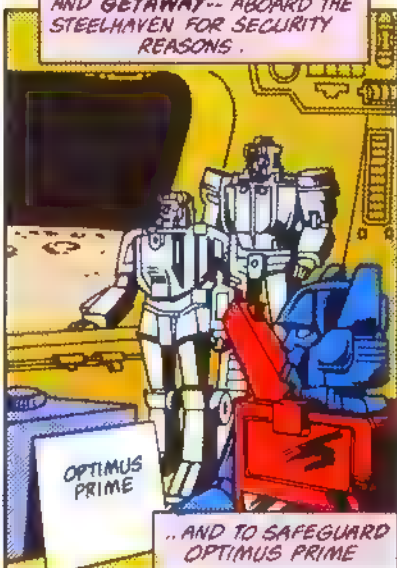
BY GRIMLOCK'S ORDER,
ALL AUTOBOTS ABOARD
THE ARK DISEMBARK

ONLY GRIMLOCK'S
FELLOW DINOBOTS--
SLUDGE, SLAG AND
SWOOP-- APPEAR TO
BE LOOKING FORWARD
TO WHAT IS ABOUT TO
TAKE PLACE.

NEARBY, FORTRESS MAXIMUS LEADS HIS FOLLOWERS TO THE ARENA.



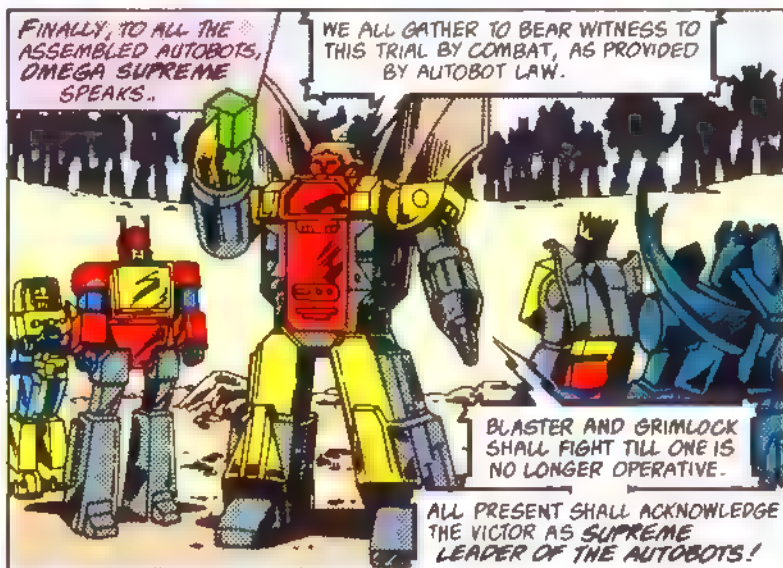
LEAVING ONLY A SKELETON CREW-- SLAPPASH, JOYRIDE AND GETAWAY-- ABOARD THE STEELHAVEN FOR SECURITY REASONS.



OPTIMUS PRIME

.. AND TO SAFEGUARD OPTIMUS PRIME

FINALLY, TO ALL THE ASSEMBLED AUTOBOTS, OMEGA SUPREME SPEAKS..



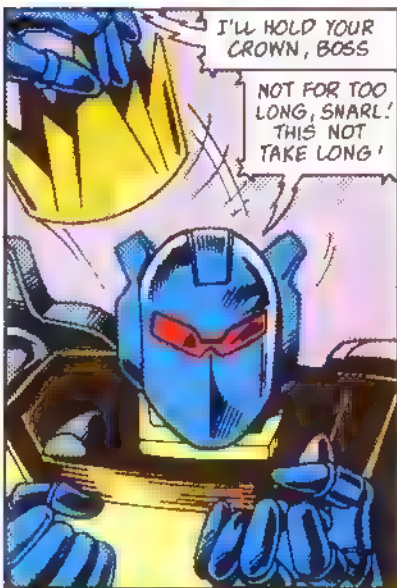
WE ALL GATHER TO BEAR WITNESS TO THIS TRIAL BY COMBAT, AS PROVIDED BY AUTOBOT LAW.

BLASTER AND GRIMLOCK SHALL FIGHT TILL ONE IS NO LONGER OPERATIVE.

ALL PRESENT SHALL ACKNOWLEDGE THE VICTOR AS SUPREME LEADER OF THE AUTOBOTS!

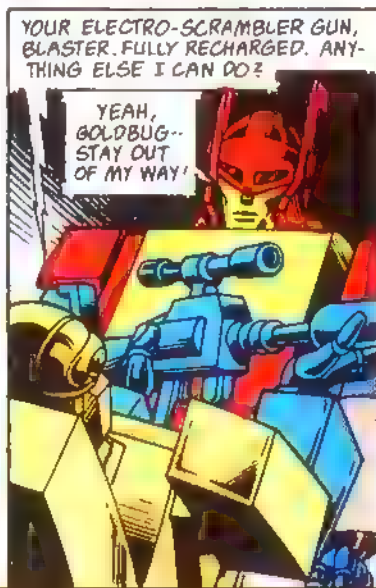
I'LL HOLD YOUR CROWN, BOSS

NOT FOR TOO LONG, SNARL! THIS NOT TAKE LONG!

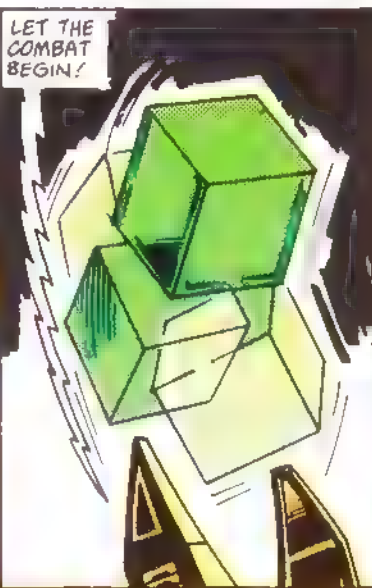


YOUR ELECTRO-SCRAMBLER GUN, BLASTER, FULLY RECHARGED. ANYTHING ELSE I CAN DO?

YEAH, GOLDBUG-- STAY OUT OF MY WAY!



LET THE COMBAT BEGIN!



NEXT:

MOON MADNESS!

MARVEL®



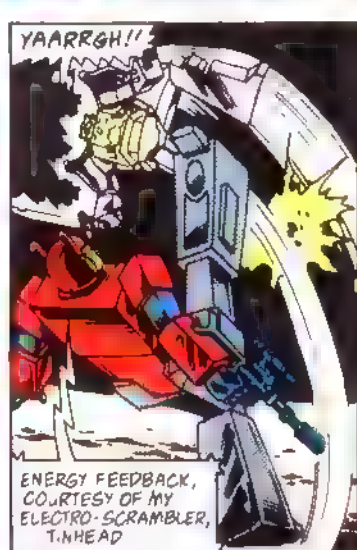
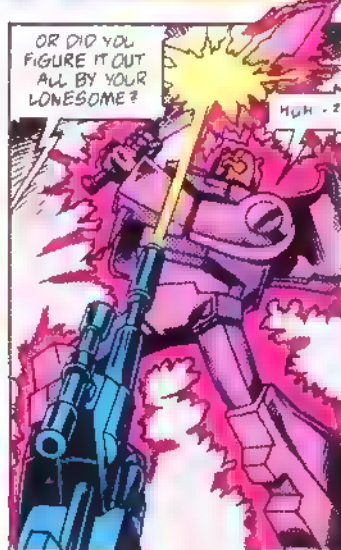
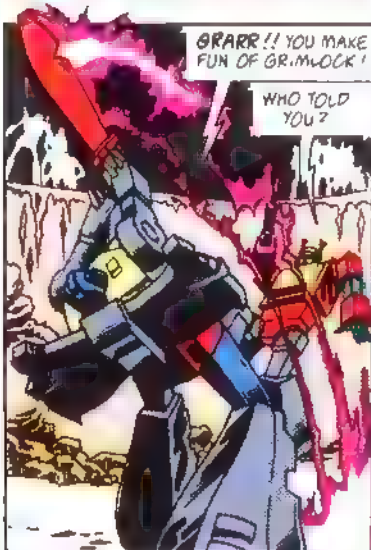
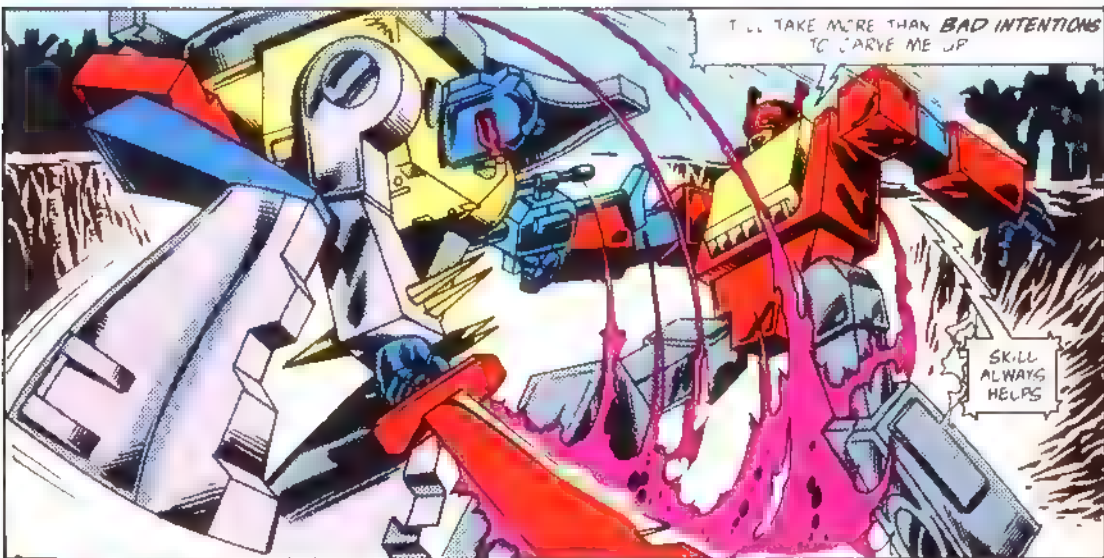
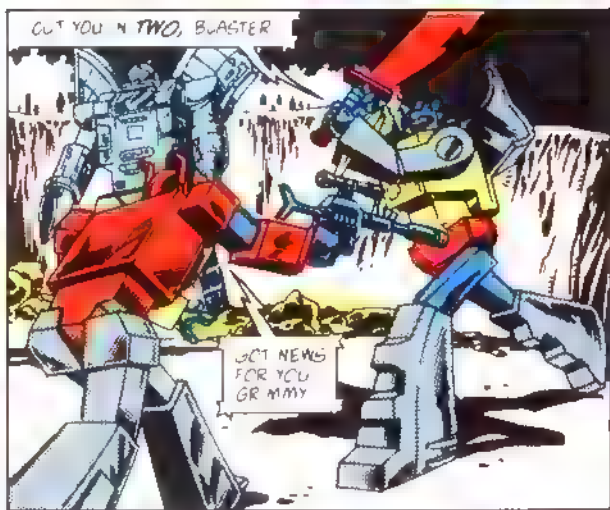
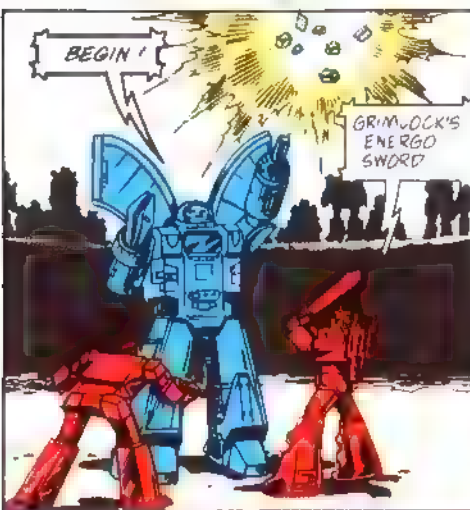
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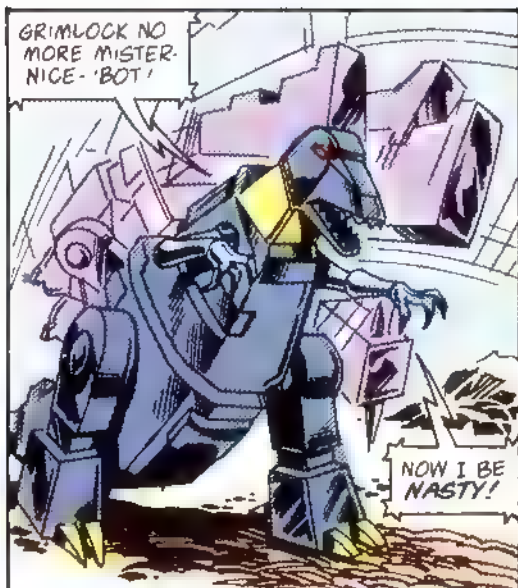
THE TRANSFORMERS FORMERS™

and

ACTION FORCE™

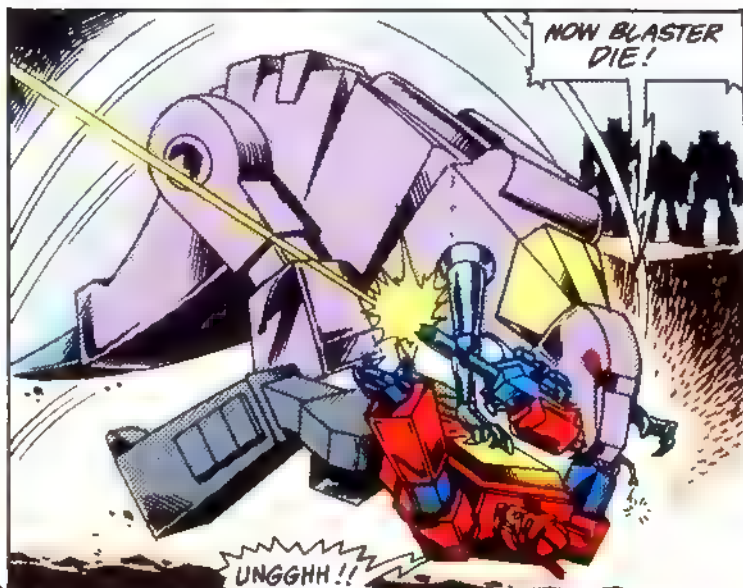






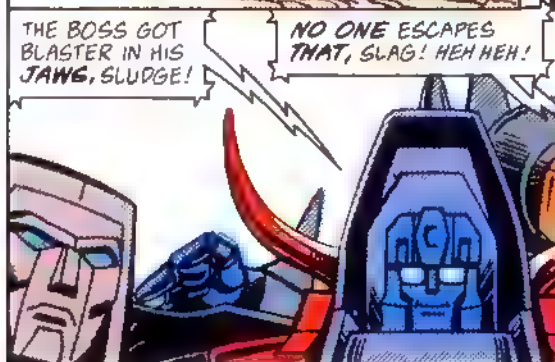
GRIMLOCK NO MORE MISTER NICE-BOT!

NOW I BE NASTY!



NOW BLASTER DIE!

UNGGHH!!



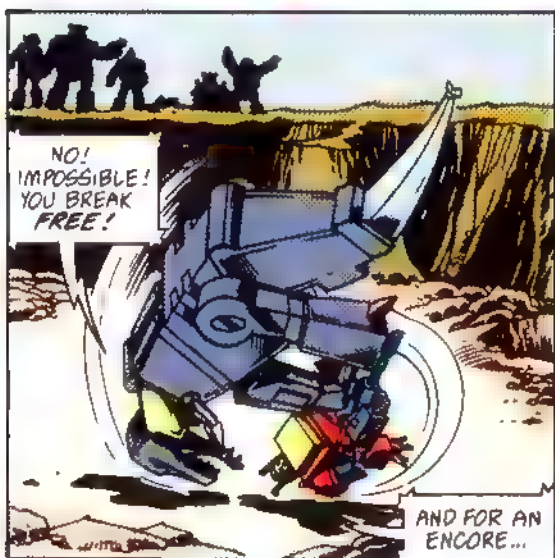
THE BOSS GOT BLASTER IN HIS JAW, SLUDGE!

NO ONE ESCAPES THAT, SLAG! HEH HEH!

I LOVE SEEIN' THE BOSS CHWEN HIS VICTIMS UP SLOWLY!

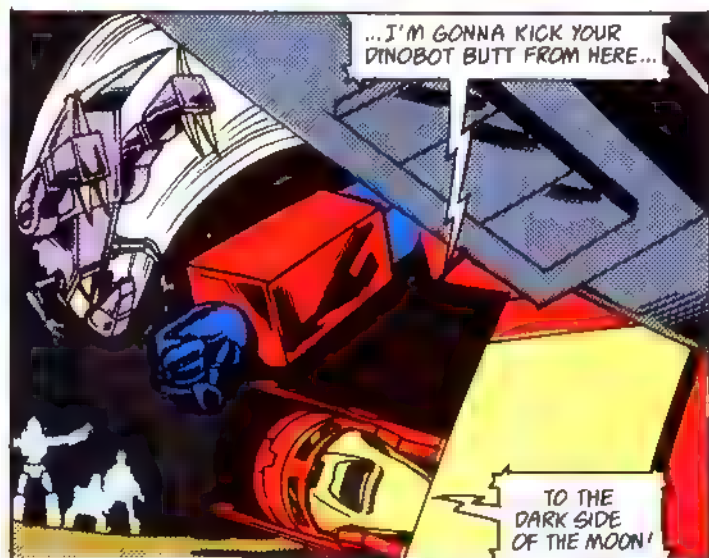
VIOLENCE OF ANY SORT IS UNCONSCIONABLE, SWOOP!

C'MON, BLASTER--DO SOMETHING!



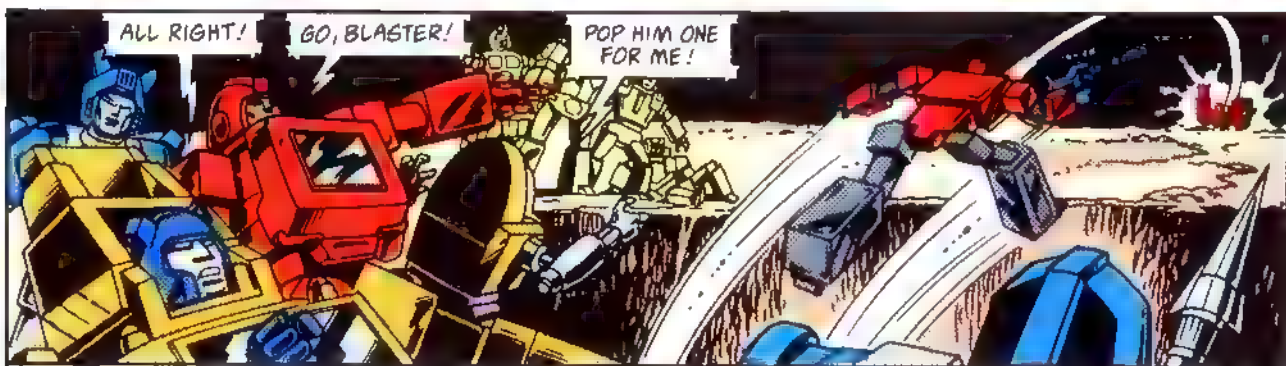
NO! IMPOSSIBLE! YOU BREAK FREE!

AND FOR AN ENCORE...



...I'M GONNA KICK YOUR DINOBOT BUTT FROM HERE...

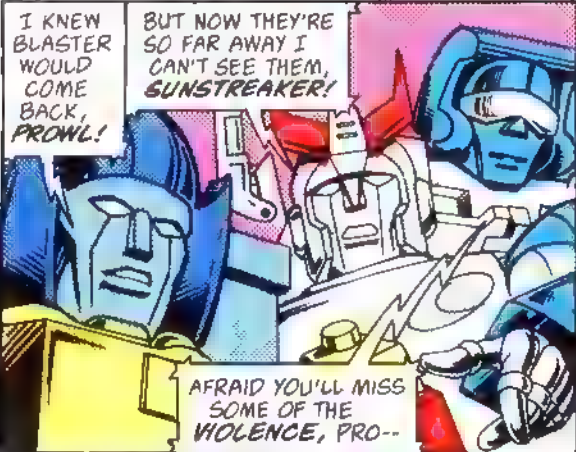
TO THE DARK SIDE OF THE MOON!



ALL RIGHT!

GO, BLASTER!

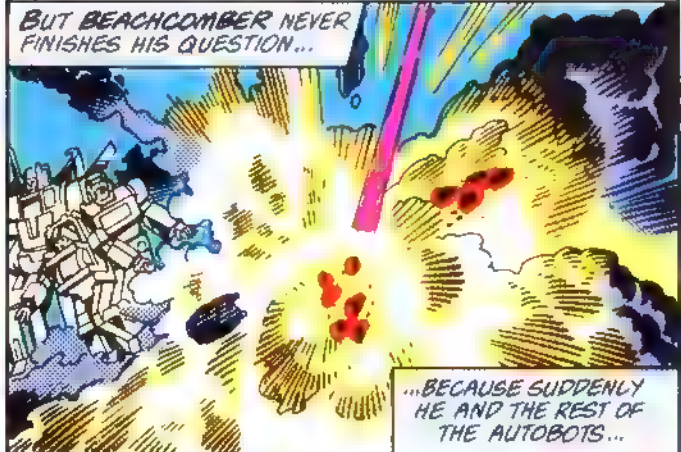
POP HIM ONE FOR ME!



I KNEW BLASTER WOULD COME BACK, PROWL!

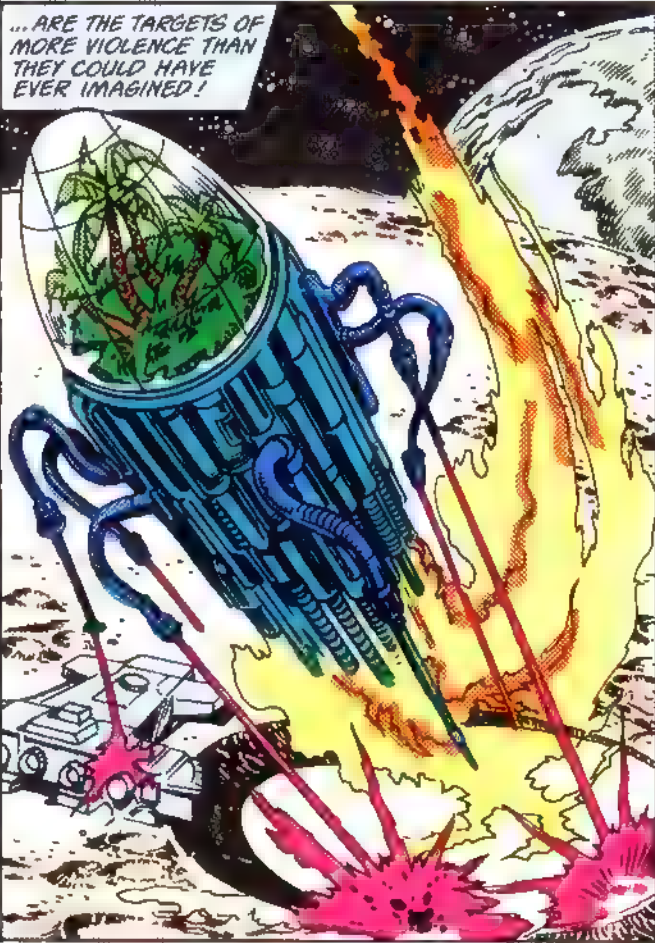
BUT NOW THEY'RE SO FAR AWAY I CAN'T SEE THEM, SUNSTREAKER!

AFRAID YOU'LL MISS SOME OF THE VIOLENCE, PRO--

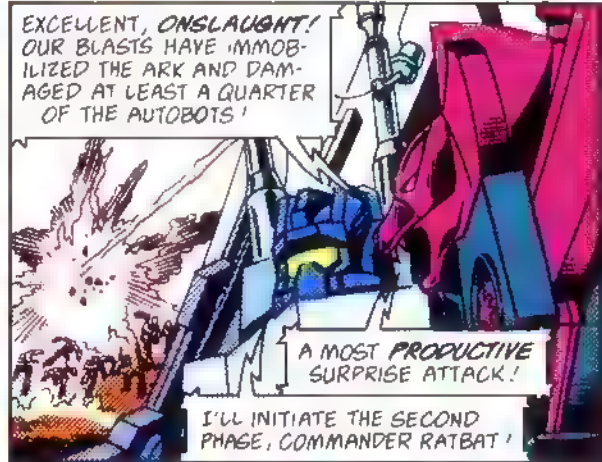


BUT BEACHCOMBER NEVER FINISHES HIS QUESTION...

...BECAUSE SUDDENLY HE AND THE REST OF THE AUTOBOTS...



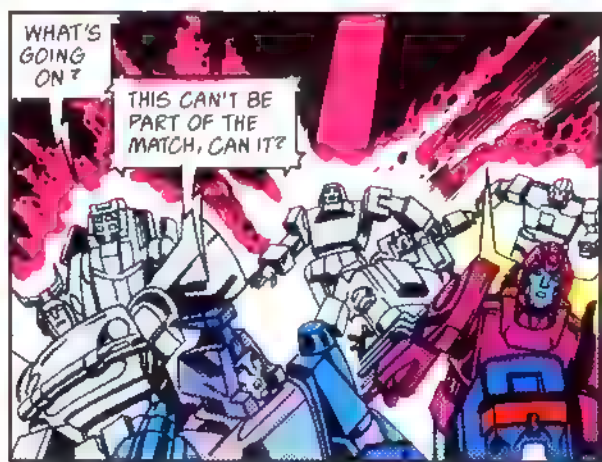
...ARE THE TARGETS OF MORE VIOLENCE THAN THEY COULD HAVE EVER IMAGINED!



EXCELLENT, ONSLAUGHT! OUR BLASTS HAVE IMMOBILIZED THE ARK AND DAMAGED AT LEAST A QUARTER OF THE AUTOBOTS!

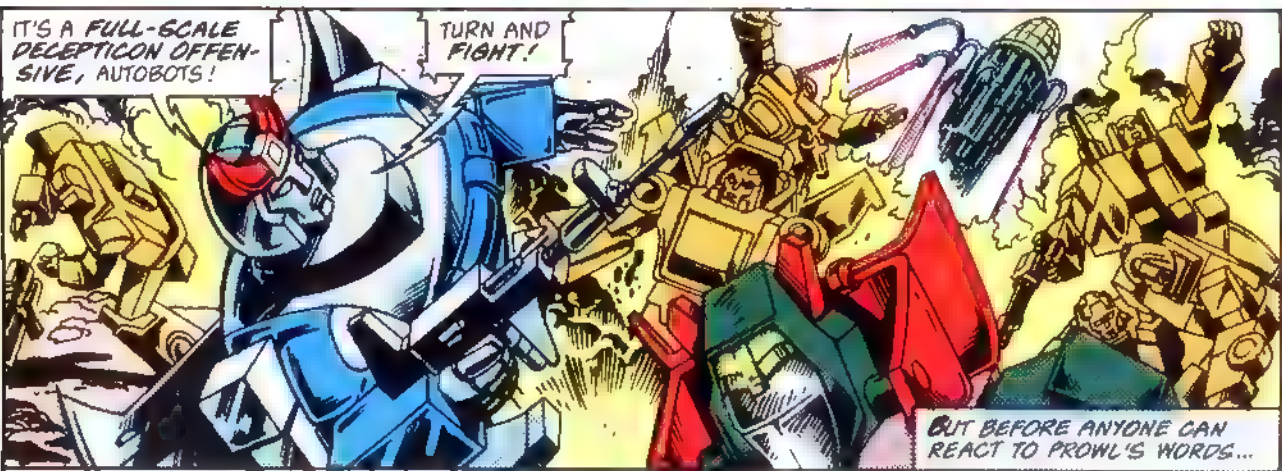
A MOST PRODUCTIVE SURPRISE ATTACK!

I'LL INITIATE THE SECOND PHASE, COMMANDER RATBAT!



WHAT'S GOING ON?

THIS CAN'T BE PART OF THE MATCH, CAN IT?



IT'S A FULL-SCALE DECEPTICON OFFENSIVE, AUTOBOTS!

TURN AND FIGHT!

BUT BEFORE ANYONE CAN REACT TO PROWL'S WORDS...

DECEPTICONS
ATTACK!

SHOOT TO
DESTROY!

SCRAP
EVERYONE!

BUT NOT ALL
DECEPTICONS
FOLLOW ONSLAUGHT.

THIS WAY,
CONSTRUCTICONS--

--WE HAVE OUR
OWN JOB TO DO!

LED BY BONECRUSHER, THE CONSTRUCTICONS LAND AND
TRANSFORM ATOP THE ARK...

...AND PROCEED TO
RIP IT APART!

MEANWHILE...

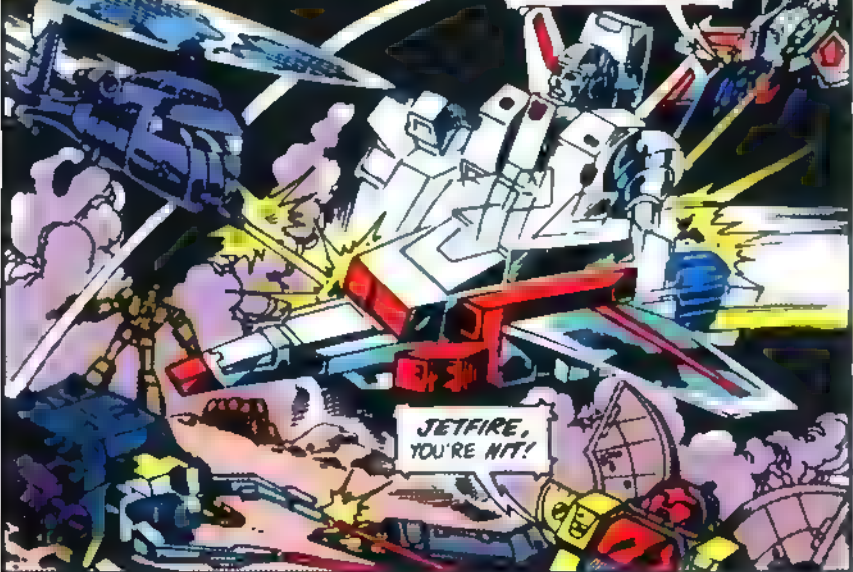
THE LUNAR SURFACE BECOMES
THE STAGE FOR A SAVAGE
SPECTACLE, INDEED..



AS WAVES OF DECEPTICON WARRIORS
WASH OVER THE UNPREPARED AND
OUTMANOEUVRED AUTOBOTS...

WITH PREDICTABLE, PAINFUL RESULTS

SOUNDWAVE!

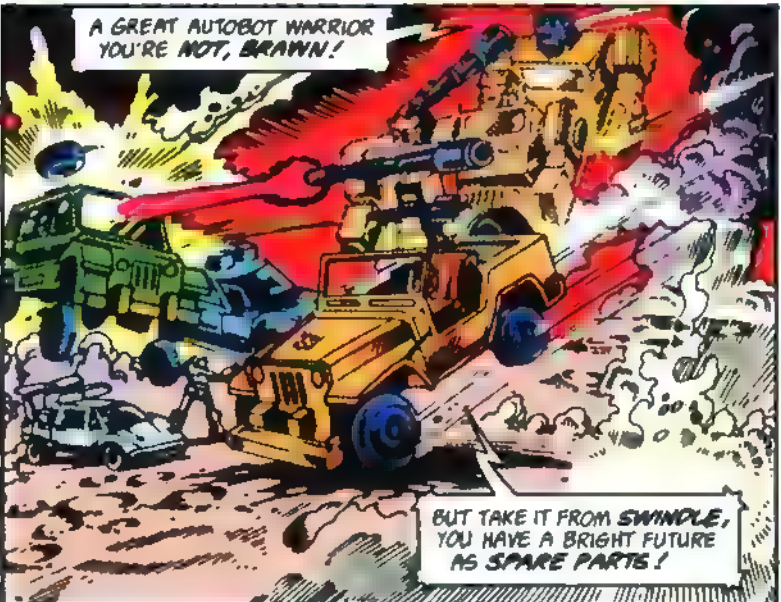


JETFIRE,
YOU'RE HIT!



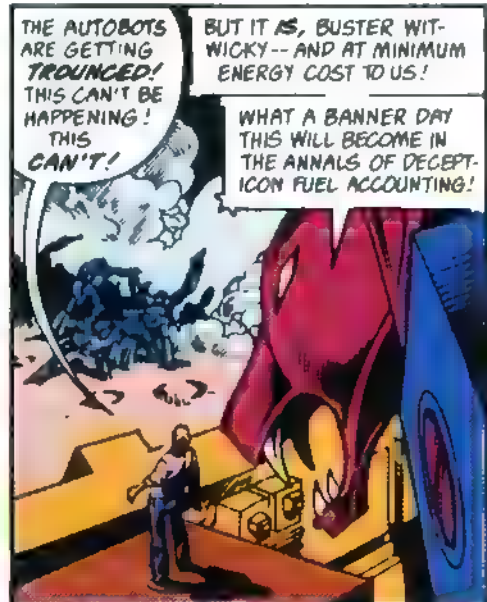
YOUR DEATH-SCREAMS
WOULD BE MUSIC TO
THE AUDIO MODULES
OF SOUNDWAVE..

...IF ONLY I COULD HEAR
THEM IN THIS VACUUM,
AUTOBOT!



A GREAT AUTOBOT WARRIOR
YOU'RE NOT, BRAWN!

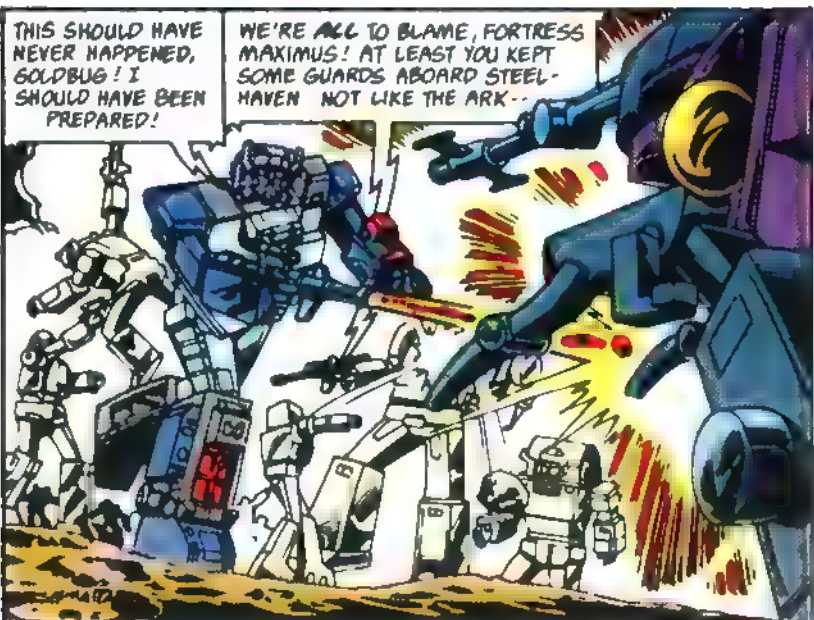
BUT TAKE IT FROM SWINDLE,
YOU HAVE A BRIGHT FUTURE
AS SPARE PARTS!



THE AUTOBOTS
ARE GETTING
TROUGHED!
THIS CAN'T BE
HAPPENING!
THIS
CAN'T!

BUT IT IS, BUSTER WIT-
WICKY-- AND AT MINIMUM
ENERGY COST TO US!

WHAT A BANNER DAY
THIS WILL BECOME IN
THE ANNALS OF DECEPT-
ICON FUEL ACCOUNTING!



THIS SHOULD HAVE
NEVER HAPPENED,
GOLDBUG! I
SHOULD HAVE BEEN
PREPARED!

WE'RE ALL TO BLAME, FORTRESS
MAXIMUS! AT LEAST YOU KEPT
SOME GUARDS ABOARD STEEL-
HAVEN NOT LIKE THE ARK--



EH-- THE ARK?! WHAT'S
GOING ON THERE?

CAREFUL HOW YOU LOAD 'EM
INTO LONG HAUL, HOOK!

DO YOU QUESTION MY SKILL,
SCRAPPER? YOUR
DOUBTS WOUND ME AS
SURELY AS A LASER BLAST!

A DEFEATED AND CAPTURED BY THE AUTOBOTS IN
TRANSFORMERS # 71

CAN THE THEATRICALS AND
KEEP WORKING! WE HAVE
A LOT MORE WORK
TO DO!

THE ARK IS IN RUINS AND STEEL-
HAVEN IS UNDER ATTACK! GOLD-
BUG, YOU MUST LEAVE HERE!

BUT--

NO BUTS! THESE
ARE YOUR ORDERS...

MOMENTS
LATER...

I HATE TO
ABANDON MY
AUTOBOT
BRETHREN...

BUT FORTRESS
MAXIMUS IS RIGHT
THIS IS MORE
IMPORTANT THAN
ANYTHING I CAN
DO HERE!

MEANWHILE, SEVERAL MILES AWAY...

SURRENDER YET, TOASTER-HEAD?

NO UNDERSTAND MEANING
OF "SURRENDER," BLASTER!

DOESN'T SURPRISE ME

YOU MAKE FUN OF
GRIMLOCK AGAIN?

HEY, LOOK OVER
THERE!

YOU THINK GRIM-
LOCK DUMB, FALL
FOR YOUR TRICK!

YES AND NO--YES,
YOU'RE DUMB NO,
IT'S NOT A TRICK.

LOOK AT ALL THE COMMOTION
BACK AT THE CRATER.

LET'S CALL IT A
TRUCE AND
INVESTIGATE

NO. ANOTHER
TRICK

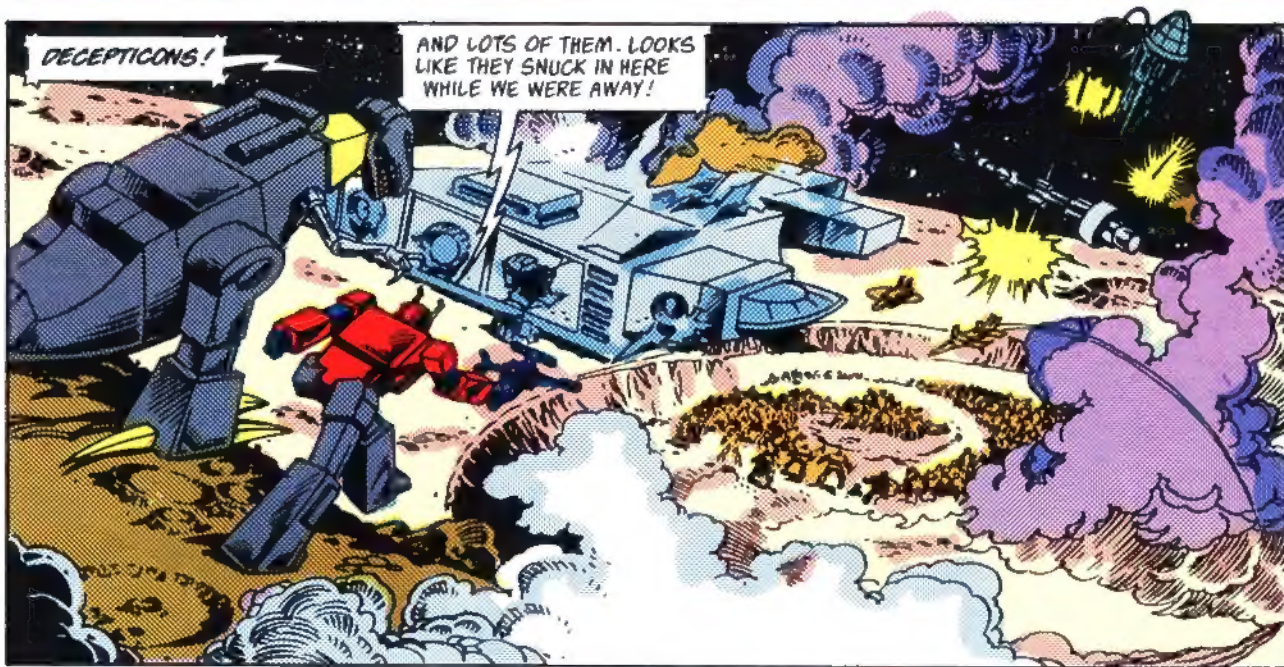
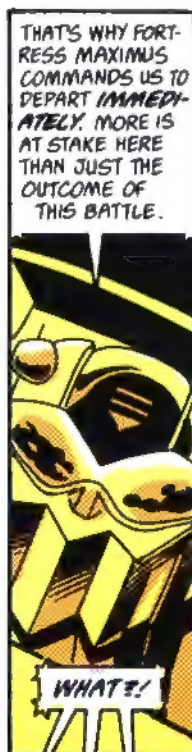
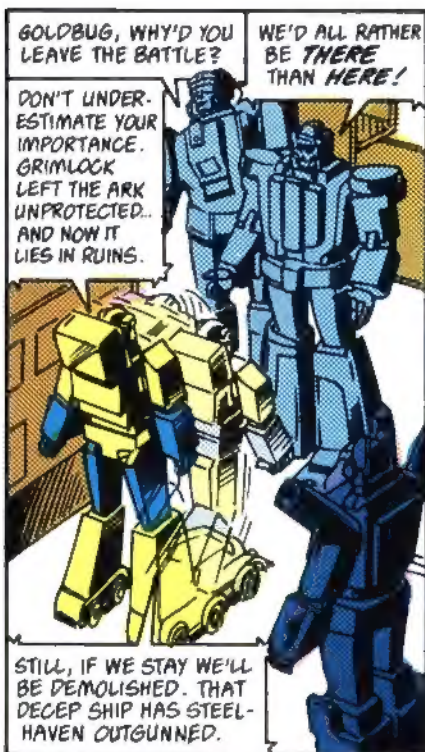
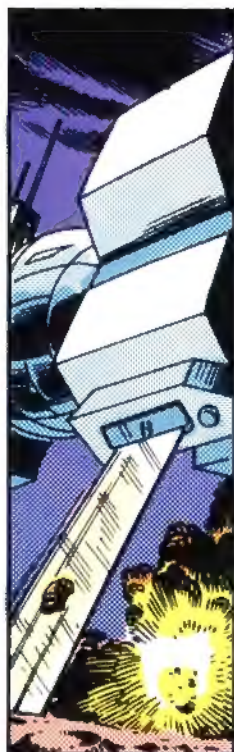
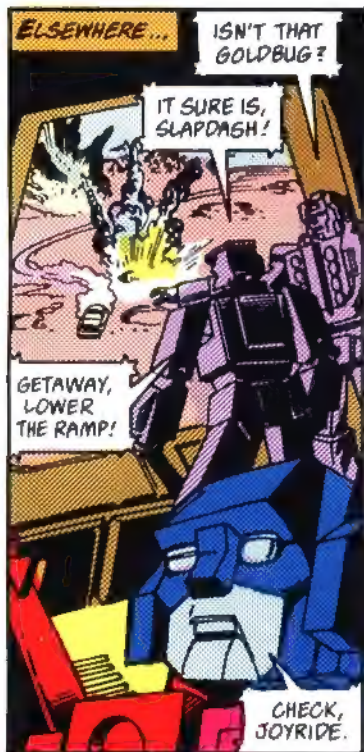
LOOK, GRIMSTER--I'M THE TRUST-
WORTHY ONE YOU'RE NOT. GOT IT?

IF THIS WERE YOUR SUGGESTION,
NEITHER OF US WOULD BELIEVE IT.

ME KNOW ME
WOULDN'T

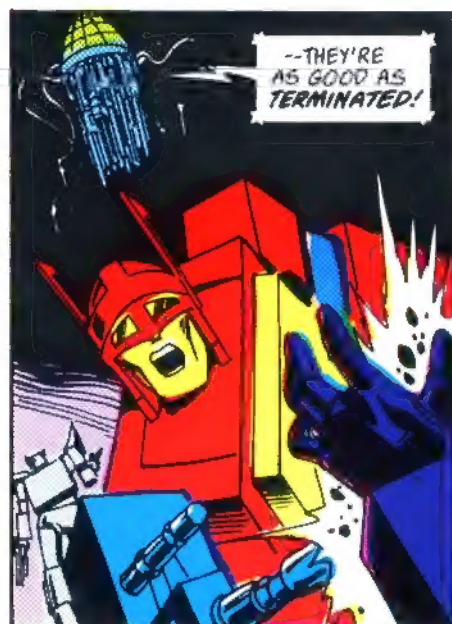
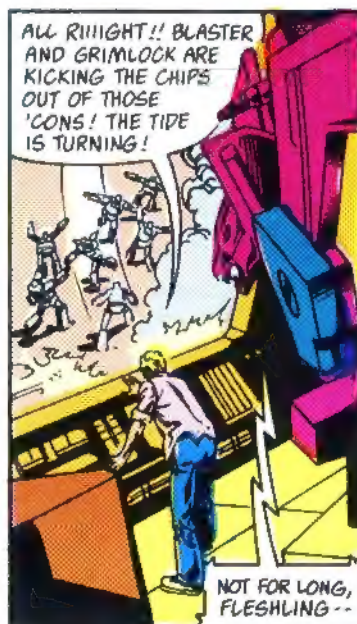
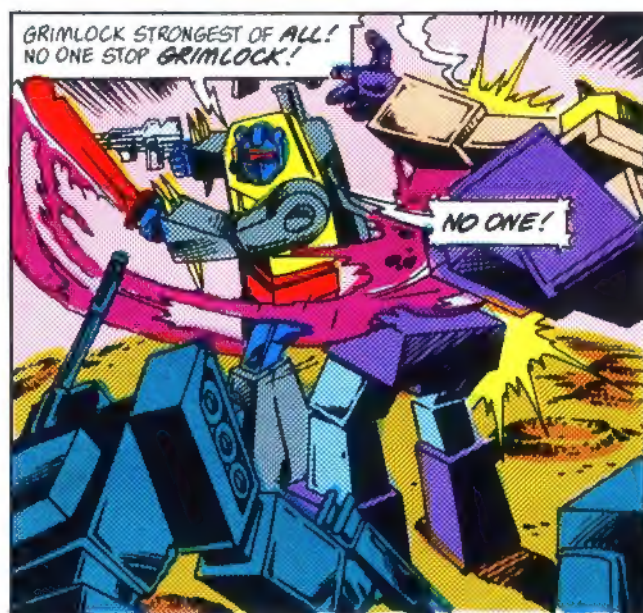
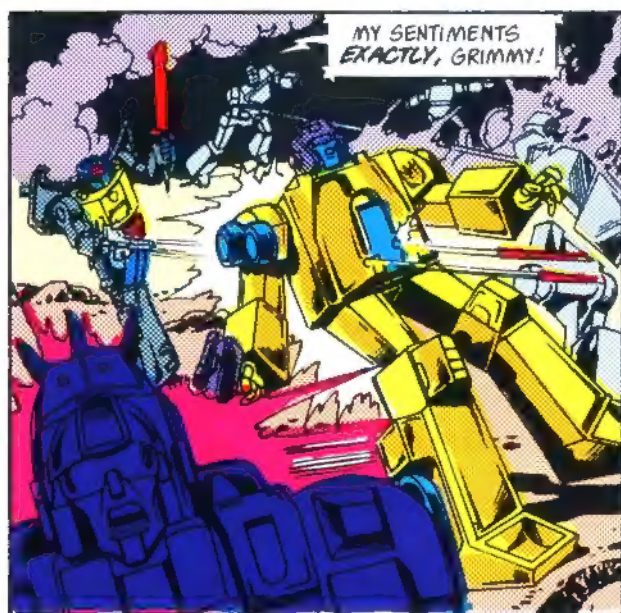
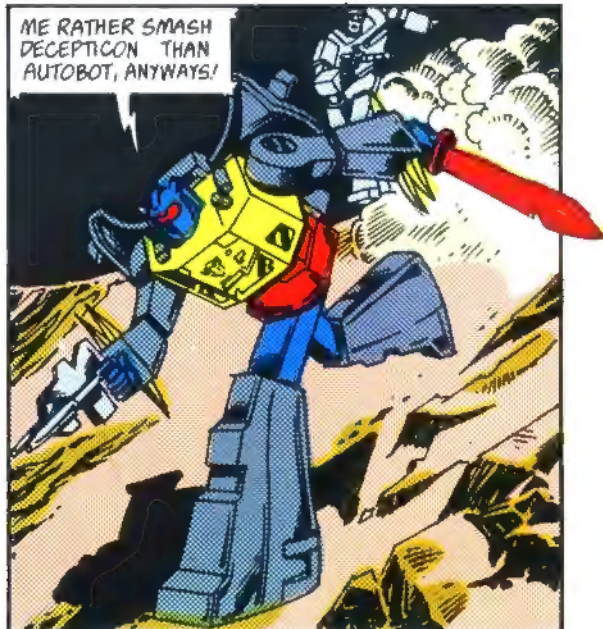
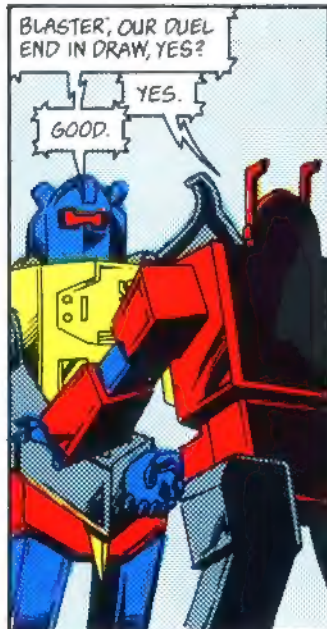
THEN WE
AGREE,
RIGHT?

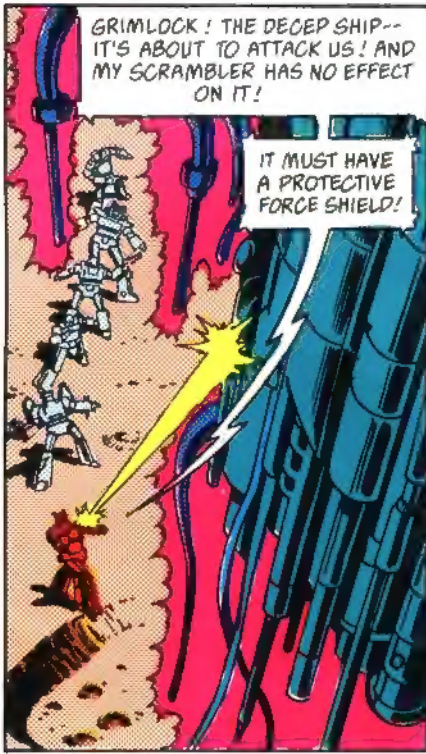
OKEY-DOKEY,
BLASTER





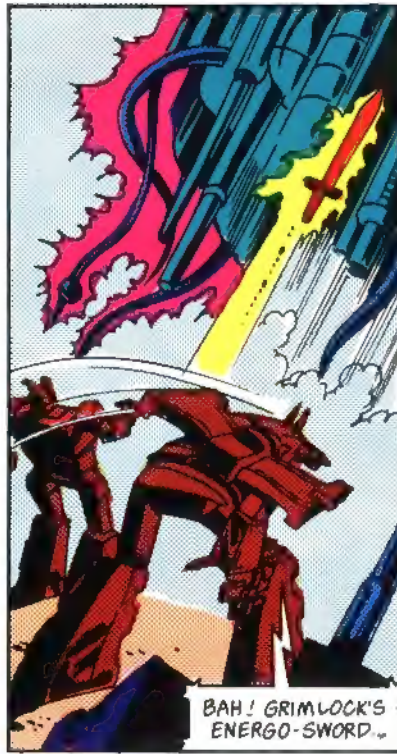
BUT ME NO ACT
LIKE IT. ME **FOR-
GET** THEM WHEN
ME SHOULD **PROTECT**
THEM.



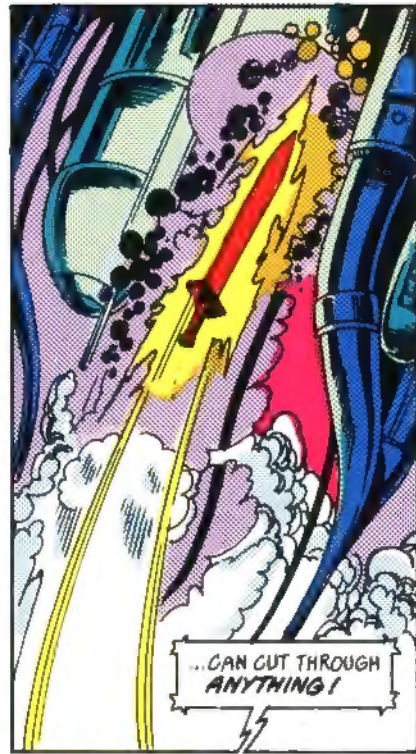


GRIMLOCK! THE DECEP SHIP-- IT'S ABOUT TO ATTACK US! AND MY SCRAMBLER HAS NO EFFECT ON IT!

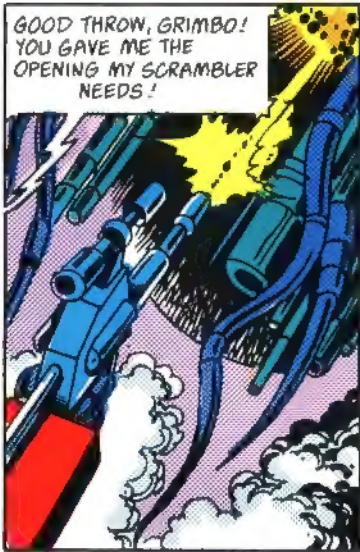
IT MUST HAVE A PROTECTIVE FORCE SHIELD!



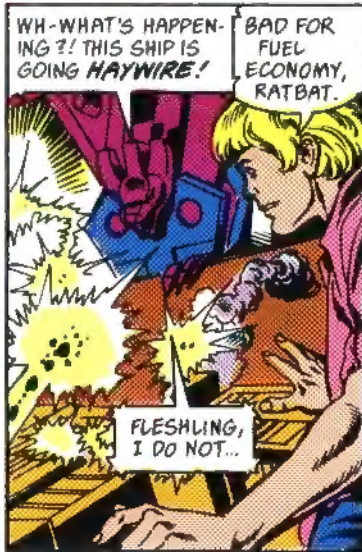
BAH! GRIMLOCK'S ENERGO-SWORD...



...CAN CUT THROUGH ANYTHING!



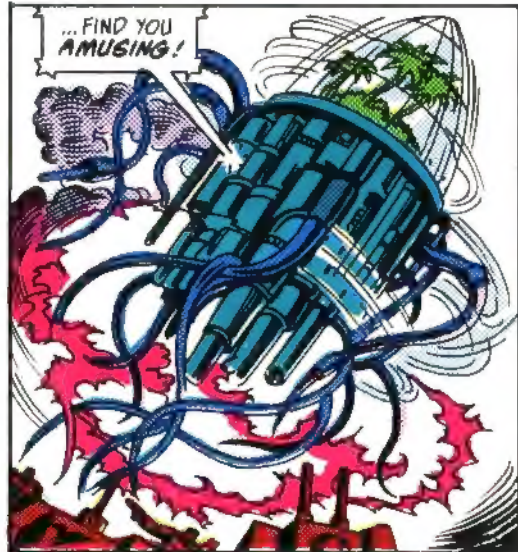
GOOD THROW, GRIMBO! YOU GAVE ME THE OPENING MY SCRAMBLER NEEDS!



WH-WHAT'S HAPPENING?! THIS SHIP IS GOING HAYWIRE!

BAD FOR FUEL ECONOMY, RATBAT.

FLESHLING, I DO NOT...



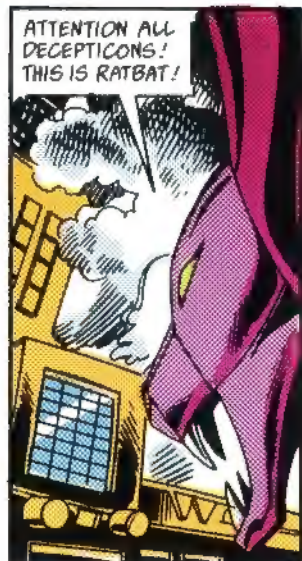
...FIND YOU AMUSING!



OUR SHIP--!

WHAT IS WRONG WITH IT?!

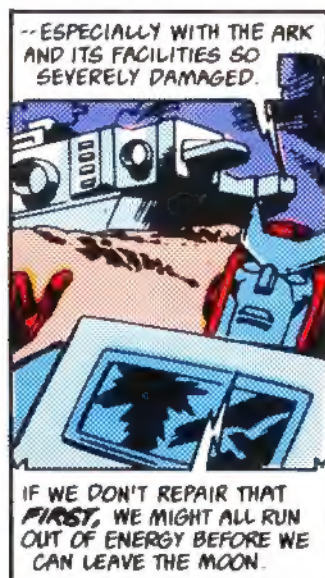
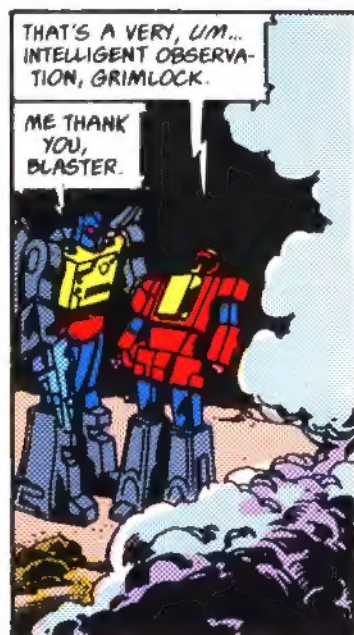
HOW COME IT'S WOBBLING LIKE THAT?!



ATTENTION ALL DECEPTICONS! THIS IS RATBAT!



RETURN TO THE SHIP IMMEDIATELY!



NEXT: PEOPLE POWER!